

Competition

WIN ALL OF THIS

- The Milling Experience
- Two nights' B&B
- Dinner for two at The Swan
- A collection of Kitchen Devils knives



Earlier this year the Brecon Beacons National Park became one of only five destinations in the world to be awarded International Dark Sky status – heaven on earth for anyone interested in star gazing as the skies are unpolluted by any form of extraneous lighting

Baking, B&B and Bistro in the Brecon Beacons

To celebrate both National Real Bread Maker Week (11-17 May) and National Mills Weekend (11-12 May) EC is giving one lucky reader plus guest the chance to get away from it all in the beauty of the Brecon Beacons (www.breconbeacons.org) and become a miller for the day in one of only a handful of working water mills in the country. Not only that, you will be hosted by Joyce Shaw for a couple of nights in her spectacularly spacious B&B (you get your own sitting room and TV) and dine at The Swan (surely a contender for friendliest UK hotel) in nearby Hay-on-Wye



Resident baker Stephanie Durning knows a thing or two about bread

Talgarth Mill

An active member of the Real Bread Campaign, Talgarth Mill is one of those feel-good stories that prove determination and many hands make anything possible.

"There has been a mill here for about 1000 years," explains volunteer miller Clive Micklewright – today the mill is maintained and operated by a team of local volunteers. "In all that time it has been grinding wheat for flour apart from a comparatively brief spell between the 1940s and 2011."

Having stopped working as a mill in the 1940s, the miller – current owner Bruce Williams' grandfather – had been forced to destroy it due to absurd bureaucracy that required Williams Senior to pay water rates in spite of the fact the mill wasn't functioning. Years later in 2010, the indefatigable Bruce decided it was time to resurrect the mill, applied for a grant, was picked to star in the BBC1 TV programme Village SOS and was given just a year to raise the mighty mill from the dead due to TV scheduling.

"Luckily we had an engineer in Talgarth who knew how to design these things," smiles Bruce.

"Time was tight, but we did it and today people come from miles around to visit, which is great news for the town as well."

Adjacent to the mill is a thriving café that is run as a social enterprise and a bakery where locally grown wheat finally becomes bread.

Miller and baker for a day

New for 2013 is the Talgarth Milling Experience which enables people – including our lucky competition winner – to spend first a couple of hours learning the art of milling: from adjusting the sluice to let the right amount of water in, to winnowing (cleaning the grain), firing up the mill, controlling the grind stones and bagging the flour, which they take to the bakery for the next stage of the day.

Here resident baker Stephanie Durning shares her tricks of the trade as you work together to transform your flour into crusty loaves that can be taken home with you at the end of the day. Real bread made with flour you have milled yourself. EC was lucky enough to have spent a day at Talgarth and can highly recommend it – not just for the Milling Experience, but for the legions of delightful people (most of whom are volunteers) who are ensuring that this ancient way of life is not only maintained but also there for the rest of us to enjoy. www.talgarthmill.com



Up the hill from Talgarth, boasting spectacular views over the imposing Black Mountains, is the luxurious The Granary bed and breakfast, run with utter devotion by Joyce Shaw and her able sidekick, husband Ray.

"You've got to enjoy meeting people and be able to chat to them, whatever their background," says Joyce when asked what the secret of running a successful B&B is. Modesty prevents her from adding that the house has to be spotless from top to bottom and the fact that her legendary breakfasts attract repeat business time and again.

The lucky winner will be able to sample two of Joyce's breakfasts as the prize includes two nights at The Granary (Sunday-Thursday nights only, subject to availability).

www.thegranaryinthepark.com



To ensure you have the wherewithal to cut your bread, the winner will also receive a selection of three Kitchen Devils knives, including a Bread Knife, which will never need sharpening so long as it is only used to slice bread and other similar foods.

All Kitchen Devils knives are dishwasher proof and come with a 15 year guarantee. www.kitchendevils.com

Kitchen Devils



The Swan at Hay-on-Wye

A trip to the area would not be complete without visiting Hay-on-Wye and its plethora of bookshops. Included in the prize is a meal for two (excluding drinks) at the delightful Swan Hotel. Run by sister Amy (GM) and brother Harry (chef) Mackintosh, you feel part of the family as soon as you walk in the door. If you are after stuffy formality, The Swan is not for you. If, however, you enjoy warmth, friendliness, huge home-from-home bedrooms and waitresses who love the food they serve so much that they can barely contain themselves with excitement when asked to recommend which dessert to follow one of the best fillet steaks ever – then you are in for a treat.

www.swanathay.co.uk

How to enter

To be in with a chance of winning this fabulous prize simply answer the following question:

Name two activities involved in operating a water mill

Please email your entry, including your full name, address and telephone number to editor@essentiallycatering.co.uk to arrive no later than **Friday 21st June 2013**.

Please note: the editor's decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into.

Full terms & conditions can be found at www.essentiallycatering.co.uk